

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Allison Penner, Deputy Clerk
Meeting Date: May 8, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-053
Subject: Animal Control 2024 Year in Review and Dog By-law Update

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-053 respecting Animal Control 2024 Year in Review and Dog By-law Update, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council direct staff to bring forward a by-law to amend the Dog By-law, as outlined in the report.

Highlights:

- In December 2024, City Council awarded a contract for the provision of animal control services to Todd and Renee Robins for a 5-year term ending December 31, 2029.
- The contractor has requested minor amendments to the Dog By-law to support operational effectiveness.
- A total of 245 cats and 135 dogs were adopted in 2024.
- A total of 21 cat and 542 dog licences were issued in 2024.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: This report supports the delivery of Core Service.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

Staff Report [CR-24-097 Re: Dog By-law, Animal Control Contract and Policy Clean Up](#)

[By-law No. 2024-113 Dog By-law](#)

[By-law No. 2011-155 Cat By-law](#)

Background:

Since 1999, Todd and Renee Robins have provided animal control services to the City through the Owen Sound Animal Shelter (OSAS). Services provided in 2024 include animal shelter services, by-law enforcement, and community outreach. Animal control services were provided in 2024 under an agreement that expired on December 31, 2024.

In October 2024, in consideration of Staff Report [CR-24-097](#), City Council approved amendments to the Dog By-law.

In December 2024, City Council passed By-law No. 2024-129 to award a contract for animal control services to Todd and Renee Robins for a further five-year term expiring December 31, 2029. Following the award of the contract for animal control services, the contractor requested further changes to the Dog By-law to support operational effectiveness.

Analysis:

This report provides a summary of proposed changes to the Dog By-law, as well as statistics and information related to the provision of animal control services in 2024. The contractor maintains records of all animal control occurrences and operations.

Dog By-law Update

Staff, in consultation with the animal control contractor, propose the following changes to the Dog By-law:

- Revise definitions of “attack” and “dangerous dog” for added specificity.
- Remove maximum leash length requirement for dogs not deemed dangerous.

- Amend dangerous dog investigation requirements to allow for flexibility in accepting statements from complainants.
- Reinstate authority for animal control officers to issue leash and muzzle orders.

2024 Year in Review

In 2024, the City paid the contractor \$4,879.68 per month, for a total of \$58,556.16 for their services. Fees were collected at the OSAS for several services, including quarantine, reclamation, maintenance (impound), shelter, failure to licence, release of ownership, and dog and cat licences. The contractor retained some fees and remitted other fees to the City, as outlined in the tables below.

In 2025, under the new agreement, the amount paid to the Contractor has increased to \$8,388.28 per month, for a total of \$100,659.36 for their services. However, beginning in 2025 the only fee the contractor will retain is for the adoption/sale of animals.

The following fees were retained by the contractor in 2024:

Fee Retained by Contractor	Amount
Adoption/Sale of Animals	\$58,020
Reclamation (\$50 plus HST per animal)	\$3,600
Maintenance (\$8 plus HST per day per animal)	\$1,616
Release of Ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50.00 plus HST per animal or \$75.00 plus HST per litter of puppies or kittens. • The contractor retained \$24.00 for every release of ownership and the remainder of the fee was provided to the City. 	\$1,750
Dog and Cat Licences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor received \$9.00 plus HST for every licence that is issued in the City 	\$5,726
Total	\$70,712

The following fees were retained by the City in 2024:

Fee Retained by City	Amount
Shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none">Charged to an owner claiming their impounded animal	\$1,675
Release of Ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$50 plus HST per animal or \$75 plus HST per litter of puppies or kittens.The contractor retained \$24 for every release of ownership and the remainder of the fee was provided to the City.	\$4,385
Dog and Cat Licences	\$17,392
Other Municipalities *	\$3,600
Donations **	\$58,737
Total	\$85,789

* The contractor has entered into agreements with the Township of Georgian Bluffs, Town of Hanover, and Saugeen First Nation for the provision of animal control services in those municipalities. The contractor has historically paid \$100 per month per municipality for use of the City's animal shelter facility. The Animal Control Agreement permits the contractor to use the Owen Sound Animal Shelter for providing animal control services to other municipalities provided that services to the City are not curtailed and that sufficient space is reserved for animals impounded from within the City. Beginning in 2026 and as these agreements are renewed, the City will require an annual capital contribution calculated based on the population being served (\$0.60 per capita). Should the municipalities currently contracting services using the Owen Sound Animal Shelter continue to do so, additional revenue to the City is estimated at approximately \$8,310 annually. The contractor will continue to provide the City with \$100 per month per municipality/First Nation until their current agreements expire.

** The City budgets \$20,000 each year in donations to the animal shelter. The City received a significant bequest in support of the animal shelter in

2024. Donations are used to help offset the operating expenses for the OSAS, including veterinary care. Any surplus amount for that year is placed in a reserve to help pay for future capital expenditures at the animal shelter.

The following services and expenses were paid for by the City in 2024:

Service/Expense	Amount
Contractor Fee	\$58,556
Spay and Neutering (Ontario SPCA in Barrie)	\$12,349
Veterinarian Expenses (North Heritage Animal Hospital)	\$11,309
Cremations (Gateway Services Inc.)	\$1,042
Dog Tags	\$1,238
Insurance, Heat, Electricity, Water/Wastewater, Garbage Disposal, Minor Building Repairs, and Snow Removal	\$35,227
Capital Expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23K.1 Unit heater replacement (ongoing in 2025) • 24K.5 Landscaping (ongoing in 2025) 	\$4,676
Total	\$124,397

2024 Highlights – Animal Control

- A total of 233 cats were brought into the OSAS (stray and released), with 245 being adopted and 9 being reclaimed by the owner.
 - The number of cats brought into the shelter does not include cats who entered the shelter before January 1, or kittens born in the shelter.
- A total of 194 dogs were brought into the OSAS (stray and released), with 135 being adopted and 55 being reclaimed by the owner.
- The OSAS website had approximately 2,300 interactions each month and the OSAS Facebook page had approximately 12,800 interactions each month.
- As per the Animal Control Agreement, the contractor provided 20 hours per week of patrols of the streets, parks, and dog park.

- Animal control complaints were accepted directly by the Owen Sound Animal Shelter (OSAS) and by submissions through the City's [Report a Concern](#) webpage.
- A total of 4009 calls, emails, and complaints were received by the contractor, broken down as follows:
 - January – 448
 - February – 251
 - March – 295
 - April – 349
 - May – 355
 - June – 304
 - July – 421
 - August – 388
 - September – 329
 - October – 268
 - November – 337
 - December – 264
- The following investigations were completed by the contractor:
 - Dog at large – 31
 - Aggressive dog/dog bite – 12
 - Leash and muzzle orders – 2
 - Cat at large – 11
 - Too many dogs – 3
 - Exotic animal – 1

2024 Highlights – Community Outreach

The Contractor conducts outreach, educational and fundraising activities to promote and support the shelter.

In 2024, ongoing community outreach activities included:

- Volunteer programs being run year-round with the Reach Centre and Community Living.
- A pet food bank being run in cooperation with the Salvation Army.
- Adorable Adoptables airing on Rogers TV Wednesdays at noon and the Mix Zoo airing on Mix 106.5 every Friday morning at 9:40 a.m. to showcase animals for adoption at the OSAS.

The following special events were provided by the contractor:

- Easter at Heritage place, display with education about rabbit adoptions.
- Anniversary Open House including “take what you want pay what you can” garage sale, tours of facility and volunteer recruitment.
- Alexandra Community School pet food drive with pet care education.
- REACH Centre tour and responsible pet care education session.
- Timothy Christian School pet care education.
- REACH Centre visit with pets, compassion for animals education.
- Community Living volunteer day at the shelter with pet care education.
- Sydenham Fall Fair pet show judge with animal care education.
- Rabies clinic at the shelter.
- Pet pictures with Santa.
- Tattoo fundraiser.

DocuPet

In 2024, the City entered into a partnership with DocuPet, an animal licensing service provider. DocuPet allows pet owners to purchase animal licenses online and takes on many associated administrative tasks including issuing licenses, mailing renewal reminders, managing changes in owner contact information, and supporting the animal control service provider in getting lost pets home.

The expected impacts of the implementation of DocuPet are outlined in [Staff Report CR-24-061](#). Increases in compliance with licensing requirements realized and staff time saved through the implementation of DocuPet will be tracked throughout 2025 and included in the “2025 Animal Control Year in Review” report planned for spring 2026.

Financial Implications:

Financial implications have been identified in the Analysis section of the report.

Communication Strategy:

This report is available on the City's website through the meeting agenda.

Consultation:

Todd and Renee Robins, Animal Control Contractors

Deputy Treasurer

Attachments:

None.

Recommended by:

Allison Penner, Deputy Clerk

Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Allison Penner, Deputy Clerk at apenner@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1235.